

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 AGRE-00 AID-05 EB-08
ICA-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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R 290100Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9304
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 0599

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS1 4 DIMPTD
TAGS: PORG EPAP VM (WFP)
SUBJECT: WFP AND VIETNAMESE DISCUSS WFP-SUPPORTED PROJECTS IN SRV

REF: VIENTIANE 0597

1. IN A MAY 15 LETTER TO UN RESREP ENGLUND IN HANOI, THE
LEADER OF A TWO MAN WFP TEAM THAT WENT TO VIET NAM TO
EXAMINE THE MANAGEMENT OF WFP COMMODITY ASSISTANCE REPORTED
ON A MAY 11 MEETING IN ROME BETWEEN WFP OFFICIALS AND THE
VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR TO ITALY. ACCORDING TO THE LATTER,
THE WFP INFORMED THE VIETNAMESE THAT WHILE THE WFP HAD NO
OBJECTIONS TO THE SRV'S SUBSTITUTION OF COMPARABLE COMMODITIES
AT WFP PROJECT SITES, SUCH AN OPERATION MUST HAVE THE PRIOR
CONSENT OF THE WFP. THE AMBASSADOR WAS ALSO TOLD
THAT SUCH SUBSTITUTION OR REPLACEMENT OF COMMODITIES WOULD
NOT RELIEVE THE WFP OF ITS OBLIGATIONS TO ACCOUNT FOR

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AND IDENTIFY THE USE OF COMMODITIES PROVIDED EITHER BY
WFP OR BY THE GOVERNMENT IN SUBSTITUTION OPERATIONS.

2. THE PRESENTATION TO THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR CAME
ON THE HEELS OF FINDINGS BY THE WFP TEAM IN VIET NAM
THAT NO WFP COMMODITY DID OTHER THAN WHEAT AND FLOUR
HAD BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO DESIGNATED WFP PROJECT BENE-

FICIARIES. (SEE REFTTEL)

3. THE WFP INSPECTION TEAM IN ITS REPORT TO ROME HAD EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT THE QUESTION OF MANAGEMENT OF WFP PROJECT COMMODITY DID IN VIET NAM HAD TO BE ANALYZED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SRV'S NATIONAL FOOD RATIONING SYSTEM (SEE SEPTTEL) INTO WHICH ALL WFP AID HAD APPARENTLY BEEN CHanneLED IRRESPECTIVE OF ANY SPECIAL EARMARKING FOR WFP PROJECTS.

4. ACCORDING TO THE LETTER TO ENGLUND, "AGREEMENT ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS HAS BEEN REACHED WITH THE AMBASSADOR FOR HIS RELAYING THEM TO HANOI CONCERNING FUTURE WFP ASSISTANCE TO VIET NAM:" (COMMENT: APPARENTLY THE AMBASSADOR AGREED ONLY TO PASS ON WFP'S VIEWS.)

A. THE PROJECT APPROACH WOULD BE MAINTAINED IN FUTURE PROJECTS.

B. WHEAT FLOUR WOULD CONTINUE TO BE PROVIDED AS THE BASIC RATION ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE EXCHANGED LOCALLY FOR RICE (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADJUSTED NATIONAL RATIONING SYSTEM).

C. THE WFP WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPLY VARIOUS FOOD COMMODITIES SUCH AS CANNED MEAT, FISH, OIL, AND SUGAR ON AN EXCHANGE BASIS FOR EQUIVALENT RATIONS OF SUCH COMMODITIES OR SUBSTITUTES ACTUALLY DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE NATIONAL RATIONING SYSTEM.

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5. WITH REGARDS TO THE LAST POINT, THE WFP INSISTED ON THE FOLLOWING CAVEATS:

A. "IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT IF THIS APPROACH: I.E., AS ENTAILED IN THE ABOVE THREE POINTS) IS FINALLY ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET NAM...DETAILS MUST BE AGREED UPON PRIOR TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECTS (AND) IT (THE APPROACH) WILL BECOME PART OF THE RELEVANT LEGAL PROJECT AGREEMENTS ...AND WILL INVOLVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:

B. THE GOVERNMENT IS TO SUBMIT ON A REGULAR QUARTERLY BASIS DETAILED INFORMATION AS TO ACTUAL RATIONS (BOTH IN QUANTITIES AND VARIETIES) DISTRIBUTED TO THE BENEFICIARIES OF WFP-ASSISTED PROJECTS.

C. THE GOVERNMENT MUST ASSURE THAT WFP FIELD STAFF WILL ENJOY BETTER AND MORE FREQUENT ACCESS TO FOOD STORES AND TO BENEFICIARIES, TO THOSE MAKING LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS AND TO THE ACCOUNTS.

6. WFP REPORTEDLY NOTED TO THE VIETNAMESE THAT CLOSER MONITORING WAS IMPERATIVE, GIVEN THE FACT THAT DURING ITS TWO YEARS OF OPERATIONS IN VIET NAM...IT HAS NOT BEEN

POSSIBLE ...FOR WFP STAFF MEMBERS WITHER FROM THE FIELD
OR FROM HEADQUARTERS TO HAVE ACCESS, AS IS THE CASE IN
ALL COUNTRIES ASSISTED BY WFP, TO THE BENEFICIARIES
...AND TO ASSIST (THE) ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION OF FOODSTUFFS
AS REQUIRED IN THE PROJECT'S AGREEMENT." THE WFP
PRESENTATION TO THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY
LINKED THIS SITUATION TO ITS REQUEST TO STATION TWO FIELD
OFFICERS IN HANOI IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE "IN ORDER NOT
TO JEOPARIDIZE THE NEXT BATCH OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS."

7. COMMENT: THE WFP WOULD APPEAR TO BE REQUESTING THE
KIND OF MONITORING ABILITY ALREADY CALLED FOR IN THE
ORIGINAL AGREEMENTS (PARA 6) BUT AS YET UNAUTHORIZED.

ROBERTS

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